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(1) Our Destiny

[image]

Talltail bounded into the forest, Jake tailing close behind.

"Fourtress!" Talltail exclaimed. "Come on!"

His heart soaring, Talltail raced down the slope until he finally stopped in the clearing.

Tree's surrounded him as he looked up at the great rock. He imagined his leader, Heatherstar, sitting up there.

Talltail had missed this.

"These oaks belong to all the clans. We gather here every moon to share toungues." Talltail explained to Jake, who now stopped in his tracks beside Talltail, wheezing.

As Jake caught his breath, he gazed around at the plentiful forest, stars in his round eyes as he did.

"Why did you ever want to leave?" Jake whispered, half to himself.

Talltail couldn't reply. This was his home, but, it never felt like home to him.

I left because I never belonged, Talltail thought to himself, although he could never admit it out loud.

But now, that feeling had seemed to disappear as he scented the border to Windclan was only a couple tail-lengths away.

As the realization kicked in, Talltail suddenly spun around to face Jake.

"I can't go back!" Talltail suddenly exclaimed as he stared in a panic at Jake.

"They won't accept me! I broke the warrior code when I left to find Sparrow, they'll never take me back!"

"...Are you really sure about that?" Jake responded softly, walking around Talltail, his thick fire colored coat ruffled by the strong wind. "You'll never know unless you go back and see for yourself."

Talltail closed his eyes, trying to take in everything at once.

He had left Windclan to get vengeance for his father, Sandgourse's, death.

At first, he thought Sparrow, a cat in a gang of rouges who vaugely visited Windclan, had left Sandgourse to die in a collapsed tunnel.

With Jake's help, Talltail had hunted down the gang of rouges. But right as he was about to take his revenge, Sparrow had admited Sandgourse had sacrificed himself so Sparrow could live.

"Talltail?" His thoughts were awoken by a concerned Jake, blinking up at him.

"...I guess I do miss my family." Talltail confessed. *But not as much as I could miss you,* he admittedly thought right after.

Jake sat down and intertwined his fluffy tail with Talltail's. "We've never really talked about you're family before." Jake mumbled.

When Jake first heard of Talltail's quest to seek revenge, he was always curious about the bloodthirsty cat's origins. But decided he'd rather not ask, in fear of getting his ears clawed off.

But now Jake saw that Talltail was, to put it simply, a cat who had much more grief than Jake had ever known.

"Well, you already know about my father, Sandgourse," Talltail started. "He was the best tunneler around." He quietly laughed.

Jake looked at him, confused.

"There's two types of warriors in the clan," Talltail quickly explained, realizing Jake had no idea about Windclan traditions.

"Moor runners and tunnelers. Tunnelers go underground to hunt and dig while moor runners hunt uptop on the plains. My mothers name is Palebird, she was a tunneler aswell, but..." He trailed off.

"...But?" Jake gently pressed.

"Well, they wanted me to be a tunneler too." Talltail admited.

Jake found this absurd. Talltail obviously enjoyed running through the tall grass and strong winds, even a blind kit could see it.

"After my father died, my mother took a new mate, Woollytail. They had kits when I left, but I just-- I couldn't stand it. Seeing her with him. It made me sick." Talltail's heart began to ache as he released his true, pent-up feelings to Jake.

Jake had many mates over the moons before he met Talltail, but after hearing Talltail explain his grief, Jake silently vowed to himself that he would never take another mate again when returning to the twolegplace.

Oh... but how could he leave Talltail? Jake had never said anything over the time they traveled together, but he had fallen inlove with the other tom.

Even if Talltail never told his story about his mother and Woollytail, Jake didn't have the heart to move on.

"...Is Palebird happy with him?" Jake quietly asked, carefully choosing his words.

"Of course, but... I don't know.. I'm just selfish." Talltail whispered, feeling guilty.

"Don't say that about youself!" Jake exclaimed. "You're the most kindhearted cat I've met."

Talltail silently blushed at this, although he would never admit it.

After a moment of silence, Jake spoke. "I'll miss you..." he said. For a second Talltail was confused, but then the reality struck.

"No!" He gasped. "Don't go! Come with me, to Windclan!"

Jake got up from where they were sitting, sadness in his eyes as he looked back at the heartbroken tom. "Talltail, I could never cut out for a clancat... What would your clanmates even think about me? A kittypet wanting to be a warrior?"

"But you've learned so many things with me! What about that thrush we caught, or that rabbit--?"

Jake cut him off. "It's not about that!" He said angrily, eyes narrowing. "Think about what would happen if you suddenly returned to your clan after moons of being gone with a kittypet of all things!?"

Jake regreted his choice of words and tone when he saw the hurt look in Talltails eyes.

Talltail was right, Jake had enjoyed his time with him. He had figured out so many new and useful things.

But could he really leave his comfortable kittypet life? Could he really shame Talltail by joining him in Windclan and failing to meet the harsh expectations?

Talltail got up, surprising Jake. "Fine, I understand, it's not like you're the first cat to drive me away.." Talltail mumbled, stalking out of the clearing; towards Windclan territory.

As he walked off, Jake stood motionless, as if his life was flashing before his eyes. *No, you can't leave! What about me? What about **us**?*

Talltail bounded up the hill, entering Windclan territory, passing the familiar scent markers. *I don't need Jake, I don't need anyone! I'll go back to Windclan and become leader! And be **useful**.*

Deep inside, Talltail knew that wasn't true. He couldn't go on without Jake, but how could he turn around now?

As Talltail was lost in his thoughts, he heard thumping on the ground.

He pricked his ears, raising his head. Talltail licked his lips, rather famished.

Rabbit? No the foot steps are too hard--

His thoughts were cut off by something running into him; making him lose balance, and causing him and his attacker to roll down the grassy hill. His world was spinning as he fell down.

Eventually they landed with a loud *thump*.

Talltail realized he couldn't move as a hefty weight moved atop of him.

He felt warm, fast paced breathing on his face as he opened his eyes.

And stood atop, was Jake.

Gasping for air, Jake finally annouced;

"I'll come with you, to join Windclan."

Word count: 1156! <3

(2) We Will Survive

"I will come with you, to join Windclan."

Birds chatted in the forest above from where they fell.

Talltail could still hear Jake gasping for breath as he laid underneath him.

"T-Talltail?" Jake finally asked, breathless.

Talltail was overjoyed by Jake's decision to come to Windclan, but did he really mean it?

"I thought the clan life wasn't for you." He mewed defiantly. He didn't want Jake to be unhappy with this life, so testing him might be the only way to be sure.

As Jake caught his breath he mewed, "How could I ever leave you?"

Although Talltail felt the same, he was stunned.

Even though Windclan tugged at his pelt, almost begging him to come home, he felt the same connection with Jake.

"Are you sure? They might not accept either of us," Talltail slanted his eyes. "What would you do then?"

Jake didn't know.

Would he abandon Talltail if things didn't go their way?

"I'm not sure," Jake admitted. "But all I know is I'd be happy with you wherever we are. Being rouges, kittypets, or clan. I'd follow you," He blushed slightly. "If you still want me to come of course.." Jake mumbled.

Talltail stared into Jake's bright green emerald colored eyes.

Jake sounded serious. More deep and sincere than he had ever heard Jake speak before.

Silence overtook the two toms.

"Of course I still want you to come, Jake!" Talltail exclaimed suddenly, laughter in his voice.

Jake relaxed and closed his eyes while taking a deep breath, rolling off Talltail and laying next to him.

As the two toms laid in the grass, gazing at the sky, they both felt something inside.

Was it relief? Love? Maybe it was just exhaustion from falling down a hill.

They continued laying there for a few more minutes before Talltail got up.

"I'm scared, Jake." Talltail admitted

There was a moment of complete slince. It seemed even the birds stopped their chirping, the wind stopped it's blows, and the clouds parted revealing a bright sun.

"Hey, look at me." Jake mewed.

"Jake.." Talltail whispered, embarrassed, while looking away.

"Talltail, look at me." He mewed seriously before getting up.

Talltail finally looked around to see Jake sitting up, staring at him.

"Never be scared. We will get though this, if they accept us or not. **We will survive**."

Word count: 395 <3

(3) Cat, Rabbit, and Hawk

"We will surive."

Talltail bounded up the moor, Jake tailing close behind.

Will they accept me there? Will they accept Talltail?

Jake was lost in his thoughts, but as he looked up, he realized Talltail had stopped running.

Jake slowed down as he almost ran into Talltail, he would need to practice on that..

Jake glanced at Talltail, who was now crouching on the ground with his ears pricked up.

Jake copied his movements, realizing Talltail must have smelt prey.

As they both slowly, and silently, stalked down the rabbit trail, Jake had finally noticed what they were hunting as he saw a white fluffy tail poke out of the grass.

Rabbit, Jake thought, as he watched Talltail take the lead on the prey.

All of a sudden, the rabbit pricked it's head up and ran.

Jake got up, wondering how the rabbit realized they were there. Talltail was quicker though, already bounding up the moor after the rabbit.

As Jake ran after them, not really comparing to Talltail's great speed, he heard a couple squeaks.

Jake looked around, trying to sniff out where Talltail and the rabbit had gone, until he smelt blood.

And something else..

As Jake peered through the tall grass, he saw Talltail walking towards him, a rabbit in his jaws.

"Sorry I wasn't a big help." Jake apologized, feeling a bit useless since his smell, strength, and energy was nothing compared to Talltail's clan cat traits.

Talltail placed the now dead rabbit in-between them, "It's alright. You'll get better at hunting in time."

As Talltall spoke, he quickly ended Jake's thoughts of feeling useless, making Jake feel determined in himself to get better.

Talltail pawed at the fresh kill, motioning for Jake to eat first.

Jake blushed at Talltail's kindness and dropped his head down to eat.

He wasn't the hungriest cat in the world, but he was pretty starved. They hadn't hunted since arriving at fourtrees.

After Jake finished his share, Talltail bent down to enjoy their kill aswell.

As they finished up their meal, Talltail began to bury what was left of the rabbit.

Meanwhile, Jake stared at the sunset.

It was more visible and more beautiful than ever to him now.

Since it wasn't very visible to Jake at his kittypet home, the only times Jake had seen the sunset was with Talltail on their jounery.

Talltail walked over and sat down next to Jake. Minutes passed by as they enjoyed the sunset and each others company.

Jake then spoke up, "I forgot to ask earlier, but how'd that rabbit notice you? The wind was blowing towards us so theres no way it smelt you." Jake stated, feeling proud of himself for remembering what Talltail had taught him about scent being able to get carried in the wind.

Talltail stayed quiet for a moment. "I actually don't know," Talltail admitted. "Like you said, the wind was blowing our way so it was impossible for it to smell us.." He mumbled, lost in thought.

Jake glanced down, "Maybe it saw us?" He guessed.

"I doubt that.. but maybe.." Talltail got up from where they was sitting and walked towards where the rabbit had ran away.

He sniffed around for a bit as Jake got up as well and started walking towards him.

As Talltail continuing his searching, he pricked his ears up, "I smell a hawk. The rabbit must've seen it and ran off." He concluded, raising his head to meet Jake's gaze.

Jake knew Talltail was far better at smelling than him, but he was still impressed with his skills.

Suddenly, Talltail's eyes went wide as he quickly began sniffing again, in a different direction this time.

"Talltail, what's wrong?" Jake asked, a bit worried that he had smelt a dog or a Windclan patrol near them.

Talltail raised his head, staring at Jake in fear, his eyes still wide. "I smell kits, my mother's and Woollytail's kits. **And the hawk**."

662 Words! ^^

(4) Is that you?

"I smell kits; my mother's and Woollytail's kits. And the hawk."

Talltail raced towards the scent of the kits. He had to get there before the hawk did. Or else...

He shook his head, not wanting to believe that the kits had already been taken under the mercy of the hawks vicious claws.

As Talltail kept his fast pace towards the scent, he noticed Jake was running behind him, trying to catch up.

"Jake!" Talltail yowled, "I think I smell a patrol on our right, go and warn them! I might not get to the kits in time!"

Jake's eyes went wide before nodding and running towards the direction Talltail had instructed.

As Jake ran like he had never run before, he also started to scent the patrol.

Jake burst through the tall grass and heather, now facing the patrol of two surprised cats.

"A kittypet--! How did we not smell him?!" The brown tom of the two growled, rounding in on Jake.

"I have no idea, he doesn't even smell like a kittypet! If anything, he smells like Windclan... but that collar is a dead giveaway." The other cat meowed, who was a more golden color compared to the dark brown tom.

"Please, follow me! There are kits in danger!" Jake begged, gasping for breath.

The golden she-cat paused, but the brown tom continued.

"Like we'd believe you! Leave Windclan territory before we rip you

to shreds." The tom warned, flexing his claws, seemingly not put off on the idea of Jake trying to put up a fight.

"Shrewclaw, wait."

The golden she-cat turned to face him, continuing. "It's against the warrior-code to ignore endangered kits, whether they're a part of Windclan or not." She mewed sternly.

The brown tom, apparently named Shrewclaw, huffed before facing the golden shecat, Dawnstripe, with distrust in his eyes. "...This is rabbit-brained even for you, Dawnstripe. How can we trust him?!"

Dawnstripe glanced over at Jake, visibly also doubting his word.

Despite his personal disbelief in the warrior ancestors Talltail had mentioned to him before, Jake knew only one other way the clan cats might trust in him.

He just hoped this would work.

"...I swear to Starclan, I'm not lying. Just please, hurry!" Jake yowled desperately, racing back from where he came, hoping the patrol would follow him.

Both Shrewclaw and Dawnstripe looked back at eachother, shocked at the kittypets words and his knowledge of Starclan, but still raced after him.

As Jake ran, Shrewclaw and Dawnstripe easily caught up with him and started flanking both of his sides.

As they got closer, they heard a screech.

No, no, no! Please be alright, Talltail! Jake begged to himself as he quickened his pace.

Bursting through the tall grass, the three cats witnessed Talltail bravely jumping on the hawks back as the four kits he was protecting hid in an old rabbit hole nearby.

With one swift bite to the neck, the hawk was finished.

Talltail dropped to the ground, gasping for breath from exhaustion. The now dead hawk laid beside him.

"Talltail? Is that you?"

Taltails head whipped back up, staring over at the three cats.

"...Dawnstripe?"